UNDERSTANDING THE DAY CARE DEBATE:

A Look At The Canadian Day Care System With Special Emphasis On The Province of Alberta

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Of late, much has been said about child care. Indeed, in the last few years we have seen a multitude of studies come froth, each proclaiming to be the voice of the child care proponents and each claiming to have found the solutions which will ultimately transform our society, through generations of well-rounded, well socialized, and better educated children. On the other side of the debate are those who believe that children are the responsibility of the parents, not the state and that greater interference by the government into familial life will lead to the fall of society,through the destruction of the very foundation of society, namely the family unit.

Child care may be the most important social policy issue of the decade, but even the most thoughtful listner may have difficulty in explaining exactly what the debate is about. This is largely due to the fact that positions on child care have become proxies for unarticulated beliefs about the role of men and women in our society and about the utility of the family unit. Both advocates and proponents of increased government support for child care use the issue as a vehicle for a host of other beliefs and issues, serving only to complicate the real issue and to stall the development of a satisfactory resolution.

To further complicate matters, "the cause of child care supporters has become a banner behind which an unusually diverse coalition has rallied. It includes, among others, "workfare" conservatives, unemployed teachers, the women's movement, professionals in child development and social welfare, and entrepreneurs looking for a new growth industry."[1] This potpourri of voices produces a somewhat garbled message, often undecipherable by policy-makers and the public-at-large.

The opponents of increased government support of child care speak with a variety of tongues as well. They consist of those who believe that greater fiscal responsibility should be exercised by governments, those who believe in the

traditional family unit, and those who see child care as simply another avenue for government intervention and control over the lives of individuals.

Thus, the child care debate continues to be tossed around the social and economic policy arenas, with policy-makers on the sidelines, nervous about joining such a potentially volatile game, until the players themselves have decided the rules they want to play by. At present, this seems unlikely to happen until a better understanding of the child care debate is developed by the general public.

It is the purpose of this paper then, to help facilitate this understanding: first, to establish where we've been ; second, to see where we are; and third, to determine where we may be going. This will include a cursory examination of the evolution of the day care system in Canada. Next, a more indepth look at the current system of child care, including the role of the federal and provincial governments, with emphasis on the Alberta provincial government. Finally, this paper will examine recent recommendations made to the federal governement by the Cooke Task Force Report on Child Care, for a look at what the future may bring.

Child care is not a new idea in Canada. In fact, it has existed in various forms for well over a century.[2] Naturally, the more industrialized provinces of Quebec and Ontario, were the first to develop day care centres around the middle of the nineteenth century. Many of the first day cares were established through church groups willing to "shelther, feed and give Christian training"[3] to children of working parents.

Individual feminists, many of whom were a part of the female suffrage movement, were cognizant of the need for day care for children of working mothers. This is not to suggest however, that they did not believe in the traditional family. Indeed, these early feminists believed that a woman's true domain was domestic and that her destined end was that of wife and mother. Day care then, was seen as a

response to the economic ails of the times which forced women into the workforce in order to provide for their families. Many hoped that day care centres would be a temporary measure, disappearing as economic conditions improved and as social reform took place.

By 1890, the National Council of Women was able to list more than fifteen centres providing support on a daily basis. "Most centres had more than 200 children under their care; several had close to 600."[4] These centres were generally supported by individual families, voluntary contributions, provincial governments, and occasionally the municipality.

As the population and industry moved westward, the number of women working outside the home increased. Similar to the East, day care in Western Canada was started by religious and charitable organizations. Winnipeg and Edmonton began to set up day care centres in 1908. However, in areas where day care was nonexistent or inadequate, some working parents placed their children in institutions, paying board on a montly basis.

Thus, from its start day care was viewed in a charitable light, providing for those in urgent need. Support came from agencies dominated by the middle and upper class, acting from a sense of Christian duty towards society's unfortunates. Following the First World War, the demand for such Christian charity declined due to the passage of mothers' allowance or mothers' pension legislation in several provinces. The object of such legislation was to alleviate the economic hardships faced by families if the main breadwinner, the father, became incapacitated. "The unwritten corollary was that providing public funds for family support would keep the mother from going to work."[5]

By 1933, there were some 20 day nurseries across the country serving some

20 day nurseries across the country serving some 2500 children. As the day care service became more professional, parents from homes of higher economic standing realized the value of early childhood educational experiences and began to set up private nursery schools. "Consequently, only the poor (who were subsidized) or the relatively well-off child with fee-paying parents had the advantage of preschool programs."[6]

As the need and demand for day care services grew, government support also grew. In 1942, the Dominion-Provincial Agreement made government subsidies available to provide day care for children. Costs were to be shared equally between the federal and provincial governments. However, only three provinces, Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, signed the agreement and established Provincial Advisory Committees on Day Nurseries. The Agreement also included provisions for a broad range of ages and care situations.

Unfortunately, this relatively progressive step taken by the two levels of government was not too last. The end of the war brought the closing of munitions plants and women in the workforce were replaced by men returning from service. In, 1946, the Dominion-Provincial Agreement was terminated and as a result many day care centres closed. Day care once again resumed its charitable character and throughout the fifties many women stayed home due to the lack of supporting mechanisms for working mothers and other social and economic factors.

By 1961, the number of women in the workforce had risen and continued to rise throughout the next decade. Federal participation was reactivated in 1966 with the Canadian Assistance Plan (C.A.P.). This plan provided for the equal sharing of costs of providing day care for families in need between the federal and provincial governments. This arrangement still exists today.

Thus, day care has a relatively extensive history in Canada. Indeed, many

argue that if time is a factor in the development of a social policy, day care's time has certainly come. This point is reinforced when one compares the development of day care to that of other social policies such as, the public education and health care systems.[7] Where then, are we in the development of our day care system?

Evidence would suggest that we are in underdeveloped state. The recent Task Force on Child Care, the Cooke Report, states that fewer than 9 percent of children with parents who work or study at least 20 hours each week, have spaces in licensed child care centres or homes.[8] Therefore, the vast majority of children are being cared for in informal care arrangements. Also, a great many children in the 6-to-12 year old range, care for themselves in the periods before and after school. These are commonly known as latch-key children.

One reason for the demand for day care far exceeding the supply is the sharp rise in labour force participation by women. For instance, the female labour participation rate in Canada is over 54 percent and in Alberta is over 61 percent. This is the highest female participation rate of any province in the country. When these labour participation rates are examined in conjunction with the fact that a growing minority of children are now found in single-parent families, it becomes evident that adequate day care provision is essential.

What type of provision then, do we currently have? Basically, child care can be classified under two headings, one being licensed child care, the other being unlicensed. Two types of licensed care exists, the most common being the licensed child care centre and the other being a licensed family care home. A licensed child care centre may be a commercial centre, a non-profit centre, or a work place centre established by an employer. The principal advantages of the licensed care centre is that provincial standards are often more stringent and scruntiny closer, than in the licensed family homes. The disadvantages of licensed care centres are

the often inflexible hours of operation, the cost to the parents, the unavailability of part-time spaces, and in some cases the institutionalized atmosphere of the centre. Alberta has 17 percent of the total number of licensed child care spaces in the country. This ranks third highest in Canada with Ontario being the highest at 34 percent, and with Quebec second at 26 percent. British Columbia has only 9 percent of the total, considerably less than Alberta even though the total population in B.C. is greater than that of Alberta. It should be noted that the Northwest Territories has no licensed care facilities at all. It is the only territory or province in Canada which lacks any type of standards at all.

Licensed family home care is somewhat less common than licensed centre care in Canada. This type of licensed care is available in all provinces and territories, except New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and the Northwest Territories. Licensed family homes are used primarily by infants and school-aged children rather than the preschool age group. In the case of Alberta, licensed private homes are supervised by agencies licensed by the provincial government to provide a family home child care program. Licensing requirements are generally less stringent than those applied to centres and the caregivers generally, have no formal training in the area of child care. Licensed family homes may offer more flexible hours of operation than centres and also, provide care in a home setting, which may be a priority of some parents. Disadvantages of this type of care is the cost and the problem of providing adequate supervison and enforcing quality controls. In Alberta, this type of care constitutes 14 percent of the total number of spaces available in Canada. British Columbia has the highest percentage at 38, while Ontario runs second with 28. The cost of licensed family home care in Alberta is actually higher than that of the licensed centre care. This is the opposite of all other provinces and territories, where in fact the cost is often considerably lower. (see Table 1.1 in appendix).

Under the second heading of unlicensed care is where the great majority of Canadian children are placed. In fact, some studies suggest that over 80 percent of children receiving non-parental care are in unlicensed arrangements.[9] Informal care may be provided by a relative, by a teenaged babysitter, or by a person, usually a woman, who makes a substantial portion of her total income by providing care for several children. Informal care may be given in the child's home or in the caregiver's home.

The nature of informal day care makes it difficult to accumulate great sums of data and information about it. The fact that so little is actually known about the informal child care system is somewhat ironical, in light of the fact that so many child care proponents and opponents claim to speak on behalf of the public-at-large. It is interesting that the informal child care system is strangely absent from debates between policy-makers and critics of policy-makers. It seems obvious that before policy-makers begin to bring about drastic changes in the current child care system, someone should ask why most parents do not place their children in a formal licensed day care setting. Many proponents for a universal day care system would, of course, claim that the reason is due to a lack of licensed child care spaces available to parents. Indeed, there are currently only 171,654 licensed spaces in Canada and 1.9 million children whose parents work or study more than 20 hours per week.

However, is it not possible that the reason there are so few spaces is that many parents prefer the more informal day care setting or at least that they find that it is meeting their needs? This would help explain why there is a vacancy rate (17% for example, in the City of Edmonton, for day care centre spaces. If this second scenario was indeed the case, policy-makers who would attempt to bring in a more extensive system of day care may in fact be imposing a system on society, which

society may not yet be ready for and may not want.[10]

Apart from the provincially licensed day care centres and family homes, there is a third relatively minor system run by municipalities. Only two provinces, Alberta and Ontario, have municipal day care centres and these spaces account for only a small percentage of the total spaces in these provinces: 4 percent in Alberta and 12 percent in Ontario. However, at least in the City of Edmonton, there appears to be a great deal of satisfaction with the publicly operated programs and this city's efforts to maintain high standards.[11]

The above is a look at the general types of day care which exist in Canada. It is however, by no means comprehensive as several other types of specific care arrangements exist. For example, there are specific care arrangements for native children, for handicapped or disabled children, for immigrant children and for rural children, among others. Due to the limited scope of this paper they will not be dealt with specifically. Suffice to say that servies could be expanded in all these areas to bring the proportion of services up to the relative level of these groups' population percentage in society.

Provincial standards and regulations are often a major source of contention between policy-makers and critics of policy-makers. One side claims "enough", while the other claims "not nearly enough". The Alberta day care system has often fallen victim to this type of debate. Indeed, as one author states, "Alberta day care standards are generally regarded as the lowest in the country."[12] Is this an accurate reflection of Alberta's day care system today? Most evidence would indicate that it is not and that, in fact, the opposite may be true.

There are several factors which may be used to measure the standard or quality of day care service. These factors are: 1) child/staff ratios; 2) group size; and 3) staff qualifications. With regard to the first factor, child/staff ratios, Alberta operates with a satisfactory ratio when compared to its

provincial and territorial counterparts and falls within the accepted ratios for quality care in all age groups.[13] (see Table 1.2 in appendix).

Group size refers to the number of children cared for together by a staff member of team of staff members in a defined physical area. Once again, Alberta falls within the accepted ranges of child care standards. (see Table 1.2 in appendix)

The area of staff qualification is one area where legitimate criticism may be levied at the Alberta provincial government. In fact, Alberta does not have any legislation which covers training requirements or qualifications of day care staff. Alberta is the only province in Canada which lacks such legislation, although few provinces have strong legislation in this area. Therefore, this is a definite area for improvement. However, there is evidence to suggest that the public does not see the need for legislation of this type. Data on the priorities of parents regarding day care , complied by the Cooke Task Force , found that parents ranked training of day care staff 17 out 18 evaluative criteria used for selecting day care. (see Table 1.3 in appendix).

Although the above factors do not comprise a comprehensive picture of Alberta's child care standards, they do indicate that Alberta is in most cases at par or better with other provinces and territories, the exception being with regard to staff qualifications. Therefore, the often black picture that is painted of Alberta's day care standards would seem to be unjustified.

In order to have a solid understanding of Canada's day care system one must be familiar with the methods used to fund our system. Under the Constitution, child care falls under the jurisdiction of the provincial and territorial governments who therefore, play the lead role in developing child care programs. However, as in other areas of social policy, the federal government is not without influence.

The federal government provides financial support for child care through

two main measure: 1) the Child Care Expense Deduction; and 2) cost-sharing of subsidized child care for low- and moderate-income families under the Canadian Assistance Plan (C.A.P.). The federal government spent an estimated $224 million on these measures in 1984-85. The Child Care Expense Deduction is the major source of federal government contribution. It cost approximately $115 million in 1984-85. This measure permits taxpayers to claim a deduction from taxable income of up to $2000 for child care expenses incurred for each child under fourteen years of age. The maximum deduction allowed for each family is $8000 and the total deduction cannot exceed two-thirds of the claimants earned income.

One criticism which could be made of the Child Care Expense Deduction is that, as is the nature of all tax deductions, the claimant must have taxable income in order to benefit from the deduction. Following from this, the value of the deduction is greater for high-income earners than for low-income earners. Thus, for those who do not have a sufficient income to necessitate the payment of income tax, the tax deduction is of no value. As the Cooke Task Force Report points out, "...this is a prime characteristic of a regressive tax measure. Indeed, surprisingly, the premise of the deduction seems to be that a person's need for it rises proportionally with income."[14]

There is a further problem with the Child Care Expense Deduction given the present nature of child care, this being that more than 80 percent of parents use an informal arrangement. Specifically, the problem is that often informal caregivers will not provide receipts. Many such caregivers do not pay income tax on earning made through informal day care arrangements and many may not want to lose their spouses' ability to claim a deduction for them as dependents. Therefore, the person who could make the most use of a tax deduction is often prevented from doing so because, he is also most likely to use an informal child care arrangement--

this person being in the middle-income group. A middle-income person is most likely to seek an informal child care arrangement because unlike the low-income group, he does not qualify for a subsidy for a licensed care centre, and unlike the high-income group, he cannot afford it. The Cooke Task Force Report predicts that of the 1.4 million families eligible to claim the deduction in 1985, no more than 40 percent will do so.[15]

The second main measure used by the federal government to support the child care system is the Canadian Assistance Plan. C.A.P. is basically a cost-sharing mechanism between the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments. The federal government shares in the cost of providing care to families "in need" or "likely to become in need", on a 50 - 50 basis. The contribution by the federal government to this program in the 1984-85 fiscal year was $90 million.

Apart from the above two measure which are designed to aid parents with the cost of day care, the federal government also has three programs which are designed to simply help families with the cost of raising children, regardless of whether or not they use the day care system. These programs are known collectively as the Child Benefits System. These benefits consist of family allowance, the child tax credit, and the child tax exemption. As the Child Benefits System does not relate directly to the financing of the day care system, it will not be examined indepth. However, it should be noted that the Child Benefits System cost $4 billion in federal government expenditures in 1984-85 and an additional $157 million in provincial government expenditures. This constitutes about 10 percent of federal spending on the "social safety net" in Canada.

Many argue that these types of benefits are designed to support the idea of the traditional family, in that the main objective is to increase the disposable income of the family, eliminating the economic need for the mother to work.[16]

However, as more women become better educated and as women begin seeing other women role-models, competing in traditional male domains, the decision to work based solely on economic need will become less common. Rather, the decison will be based on the desire to work, with the economic advantages taking an important, but secondary role. Thus, the argument follows that benefits and programs designed with the traditional family in mind must and will become obsolete, and even a massive influx of funding into them will not dissipate the need for a better day care system.

The provincial and territorial governments are naturally, involved in providing financial support for child care as well. This support is provided through five main measures: 1) tax relief; 2) subsidized care for low-income families; 3) operating grants; 4) grants for start-up or repair; and 5) grants for care of special needs children. We will examine the first three measures as it is here that the largest percentage of funding is spent.

The provincial and territorial governments spent a total of $326 million on these child care financing measures in 1984-85. Tax relief is the largest provincial and territorial government expenditure. This expenditure takes place through a loss of revenue resulting from the Child Care Expense Deduction, discussed earlier. "A deduction reduces taxable income, reducing federal tax payable, and, because provincial and territorial taxes are levied as a portion of federal taxes, provincial and territorial tax revenues are also reduced."[17] It is estimated the the Child Care Expense Deduction cost the nine provinices (Quebec not being a part of the arrangement) and two territories, approximately $59 million in 1984, or 28 percent of the total spent on child care by these governments.

Subsidized care for low-income families is also provided by all provinces and territories. These subsidies come under the Canadian Assistance Plan and therefore, the federal government offers to cost-share on a 50 - 50 basis any level of

expenditure initiated by the provinces or territories, that benefit families "in need" or "likely to become in need". Eligibility for subsidized child care is determined by a needs or an income test. A needs test takes into account the applicant's budgetary needs and the family's income. Only Ontario and the Northwest Territories use a needs test.

The other provinces and territory use an income test to determine eligibility. The income test examines only the family's income and subsidies are provided only for incomes below a certain level. This level varies from one province or territory to another. Of all provinces using an income test, Saskatchewan is the most generous. The federal government also sets maximum guidelines at which it will agree to cost-share under the C.A.P. It is interesting to note, however, that no province or territory uses an income test as generous as the one established in the federal guidelines. This means that many families who would qualify for subsidized care under federal guidelines, do not qualify under provincial.

The number of spaces which will be subsidized is also limited by provincial and territorial governments. According to the Cooke Task Force Report, subsidized spaces are severly limited in Canada and waiting periods of a year or more are commonplace. Thus, even if the level of subsidy being provided is sufficient, there are not enough subsidies to meet the demand.

In addition,the federal government also imposes several conditions on the cost-sharing agreement. One important condition which effects Alberta to a relatively high degree is that,in provinces which use an income test to determine eligibility, only services provided by the province or a non-profit organization are eligible for cost-sharing. Therefore, profit operated centres are not eligible for subsidization under the C.A.P.

In Alberta, where 70 percent of spaces are in centres operated for a profit,

the federal government contributed only 19 percent of the total $21.1 million budget in 1984-85, for financial assistance to low-income families. Hardly, the 50 - 50 intent of the C.A.P. This fact lends further support to critics of the Alberta government who claim that the government lacks savvy in how to get the most bang for the federal buck. This point is best exemplified by the loss of revenue in federal transfer payments sustained each year due to the provincial government's refusal to legislate against extra-billing.

Operating grants are the third measure of child care support offered by provincial and territorial governments. The intention of these grants is to reduce user fees for parents, or to permit improvements to the quality of service, or both. Evidence suggests that operating grants are successful in lowering user-fees, but it is difficult to assess whether they also improve the quality of service. Alberta provides a subsidy for each space in licensed centres serving children under 6 years of age and does not discriminate between profit and non-profit centres. Operating grants in Alberta comprised 46 percent of total provincial spending in 1984-85. This is a much higher average than any other province or territory in the country. This also has a significant effect on the federal contribution of monies through C.A.P. As mentioned earlier, the federal government will only cost-share operating grants to non-profit centres in provinces which use an income test. Thus, the federal contribution was approximately $9.7 million or only about 18 percent of the total provincial budgets in 1984-85. (see Table 1.4 in appendix).

In total, spending on child care by the federal, provincial, territorial, and in some cases, municipal governments, amounted to $542.3 million in 1984. Although this may seem like a sizeable sum of money, it is estimated that it contributed less than 8 percent of the total cost of providing care for Canadian children.[18]

How then, can governments better meet the day care needs of society? For many policy-makers this is a most perplexing question. The only certainty that decision-makers may be assured of, is that there is no one public perception of what kind of day care system we should establish in Canada.

The Cooke Task Force Report recommends that Canada move towards a universal day care system. This type of system would be similar to our public education and health care systems, providing a service for all Canadians regardless of level of income. The costs would be carried by all people, regardless of whether or not they have children. Day care would then be a true public service.

Such a proposal would of course, entail a major re-structuring of the current day care funding system. The costs of establishing a universal day care system are estimated by the Cooke Task Force, to be in the neighborhood of $11.4 billion. The federal share of this would be $6.2 billion and the provincial share would be $5.2 billion. The Cooke recommendations present a definite policy option for our decision-makers and they should not be dismissed simply on the grounds of cost.

However, in the same vain, proponents of increased day care services and standards must also be careful not to jump on the universal band-wagon. Universal day care is not a service with which the majority of Canadians necessarily see a need for, or want. As was examined earlier, more than 80 percent of families use informal, unlicensed day care services and little research has been done to find out why. It is possible that, "many people are uncomfortable with the idea of day care because of their feeling that childrearing is a private responsibility, an obligation which belongs to individual parents alone."[19]

Thus, as with all public policy issues, there is no clear concensus on what is best, on what is desirable, or on what we can afford. We have in Canada, a day

care system whichhas been slow in developing but, the reason for this turtle-like pace is due much more to public values and perceptions,than it is to any particular government policy. Government policy tends more often than not, to be a mirror reflection of societal values rather than,the creator of those values. When government values become out sync with society's, governments become out of power. Therefore, the day care debate will continue. As an understanding of the issue is gained by policy-makers and more importantly, the public-at-large, change will evolve.

Footnotes

1. Suzanne H. Woolsey, Pied Piper Politics and the Child Care Debate, pg. 127.

2. Information contained in this section was largely obtained from background paper, Series 2, Financing Child Care: Future Arrangements, prepared for the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, pgs. 19-30.

3. E.S.G., "Protestant Children's Homes, Toronto, 1851-1951", Canadian Welfare, 27(1), April 15, 1951, pg. 26, cited by background paper, Series 2 Financing Child Care: Future Arrangments, prepared for the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, pg. 19.

4. Background paper, Series 2, Financing Child Care: Future Arrangements, prepared for the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, pg. 21.

5. Ibid., pg. 24.

6. Ibid., pg. 25.

7. For further information on the development of the day care system compared to the public education and health care systems, see background paper, Series 2 Financing Child CAre: Future Arrangements, prepared for the Report of theTask Force on Child Care, pgs, 6 - 30.

8. Report of the Task Force on Child Care, pg. 165

9. See background paper, Series 3, The Informal Child Care Market: Public Policy For Private Homes, prepared for the Report of the Task Force on Child Care.

10. It is not within the scope of this paper to suggest what it is that society wants, rather the point is made in an attempt to bring about an awareness of this fact and hopefully to bring it further into the spotlight of the day care discussion.

11. See reports prepared for the City of Edmonton as listed in the bibliography.

12. Janice Dineen and Laura C. Johnson, The Kin Trade, pg. 13

13. Report of the Task Force on Child CAre, pg. 144.

14. Ibid. pg. 169.

15. Ibid. pg. 172.

16. Ibid. pg. 7.

17. Ibid. pg. 181

18. Ibid. pg. 205.

19. Genevieve Leslie, Childrearing as a Social Responsibility, in Good Day Care, Kathleen Gallaghar Ross, gen. ed. , pg. 1.

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7. Woolsey, Suzanne H., Pied Piper Politics and theChild Care Debate, The Urban Institute, Washington D.C., Aug. 1977.

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1. Canada. Status of Women. Report of the Task Force on Child Care. 1986.

2. Canada. Status of Women. Background paper, Series 2 Financing Child CAre: Future Arrangements prepared for the Report of the TAsk Force On Child Care. 1986.

3. City of Edmonton, Social Services. Day Care. June, 1985.

4. City of Edmonton. Social Services. Preschool Day Care and After School CAre Services in Edmonton- A Review. Jan. 1985.

TABLE 1.1

Fees Charged for Care of Infants and Preschoolers in Licensed and Unlicensed Facilities, By Province, 1984

Province / Territory	Infants			Preschoolers		
	Licensed Centre $	Licensed Family Home $	Unlicensed Family Home $	Licensed Centre $	Licensed Family Home $	Unlicensed Family Home $
Newfoundland	—	—	2 930	3 450	—	2 980
Prince Edward Island	2 870	2 130	2 620	2 930	2 400	2 600
Nova Scotia	3 110	3 080	2 930	3 140	2 930	2 670
New Brunswick	2 580	—	3 270	2 500	—	3 080
Quebec	3 450	2 930	2 890	3 300	2 980	2 840
Ontario	5 010	3 530	3 050	3 820	3 480	3 050
Manitoba	3 510	3 010	3 030	3 060	2 950	3 080
Saskatchewan	4 060	3 770	3 340	3 660	3 660	3 080
Alberta	3 220	3 590	3 030	3 240	3 350	3 200
British Columbia	5 220	3 740	3 820	3 450	3 610	3 540
Weighted Average	**4 049[a]**	**3 531[b]**	**3 100[c]**	**3 443[a]**	**3 448[b]**	**3 055[d]**

Source: Adapted from Rubin Todres Consultants Ltd., "The Price of Child Care in Canada: A National Survey," A report prepared for the Task Force on Child Care, (Ottawa: December, 1984)

Notes: Fees are the amount that would be charged by a facility for a space occupied on a full-day basis, five days each week, for 52 weeks of the year. Fees are rounded to the nearest $10.

[a]Weighted average reflecting the distribution of licensed centre spaces across the country.

[b]Weighted average reflecting the distribution of licensed family home spaces across the country.

[c]Average weighted by the distribution of children under two years of age.

[d]Average weighted by the distribution of children aged two to five inclusive across the country.

*From the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, Ottawa, 1986. (Table 8.7)pg.195.

TABLE 1.2

Staff: Child Ratios and Group Sizes in Child Care Centres

Province	Age of Child	Birth	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-12
New Brunswick	Staff: child ratio		1:3			1:5	1:7	1:10	1:12			1:15	
	Group size		9			10	14	20	24			30	
Ontario	Staff: child ratio		3:10		1:5		1:8		1:12		1:15		
	Group size		10		15		24		24		30		
Manitoba*	Staff: child ratio	1:3		1:4		1:6	1:8	1:9	1:10		1:15		
	Group size	6		8		12	16	18	20		30		
Alberta	Staff: child ratio		1:3		1:5		1:8		1:10				
	Group size		6		10		16		20				
British Columbia	Staff: child ratio				1:4		1:8			1:10	1:15		
	Group size				12		25			25	25		

Notes: *Manitoba also sets group sizes for mixed age groups, as follows: 12 weeks to two years, group size of eight; two years to five years, group size of 16; six years to 12 years, group size of 20

*From the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, Ottawa, 1986. (Table 7.2)pg. 145.

TABLE 1.3

Parents' Views of the Importance of Specific Evaluative Criteria When Selecting a Child Care Arrangement

Criterion	Mean Rating
1. The caregiver/arrangement would be reliable and available every day.	3.8
2. The amount of affection and attention shown your child would be similar to that shown at home.	3.7
3. The way in which the caregiver would discipline your child would be similar to the way you discipline him/her at home.	3.6
4. The child care arrangement would have good outdoor play space.	3.6
5. The caregiver would encourage your child's curiosity and creativity.	3.6
6. Hot, well-prepared nutritious meals (or snacks for older children) would be provided.	3.5
7. The caregiver or centre would be flexible in order to accommodate changes in your schedule or needs.	3.4
8. Other children your child's age would be available for your child to play with.	3.4
9. The caregiver or centre would be located in your immediate neighbourhood.	3.2
10. The child care arrangement would offer things to do which would help him/her develop better coordination.	3.2
11. The caregiver or centre would offer your child a great deal of individual attention.	3.2
12. The caregiver or centre would help your child learn to speak better.	3.1
13. The caregiver or centre could care for your child even if your child is sick.	3.1
14. The child care arrangement would offer experiences that are new or different from those at home.	3.0
15. The child care arrangement would have a regular routine which is the same every day.	2.9
16. The caregiver or centre would help prepare your child for school by teaching numbers, letters, etc.	2.9
17. The caregiver had a university or college degree in early childhood education or child care.	2.3
18. The income level of the person caring for your child would be similar to your own.	1.7
IF SELECTING A DAY CARE CENTRE OR PRESCHOOL:	
1. The centre would be licensed by the provincial government.	3.4
2. As a parent, you would have strong input into decisions made about the program, staff, and other issues that are important to you.	3.3
IF SELECTING AN INDIVIDUAL CAREGIVER	
1. The caregiver would be someone you and your child have known for a while.	3.3
2. The caregiver would provide receipts for child care payments.	2.7
3. The caregiver would be licensed or registered with the province or a local day care agency.	2.3

Criteria were rated as follows:
1 Not important, 2 Not too important, but does matter; 3 Important, but not critical; or 4 Very important, essential

Source: Donna S. Lero et al., *Parents' Needs, Preferences, and Concerns about Child Care: Case Studies of 336 Canadian Families*. A report prepared for the Task Force on Child Care. (Ottawa: 1985), Series 5, Catalogue No. SW43-1/5-1985E

*From the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, Ottawa, 1986. (Table 4.3) pg. 92.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1.4

Federal, Provincial and Territorial Child Care Expenditures, 1984-1985

Province/Territory	Total ($ millions)	Per Capita ($)	Federal ($ millions)	Provincial ($ millions)	Federal Share (%)
British Columbia	45.1	88	21.8	23.3	48
Alberta	65.4	134	17.5	47.9	27
Saskatchewan	18.1	86	9.7	8.4	54
Manitoba	25.4	124	10.8	14.6	43
Ontario	188.3	118	88.3	100.0	47
Quebec	168.2	142	49.4	118.8	29
New Brunswick	9.7	67	5.5	4.2	57
Nova Scotia	13.2	80	7.6	5.6	58
Prince Edward Island	1.6	60	1.0	.6	61
Newfoundland	6.1	45	3.7	2.4	60
Northwest Territories	.8	57	.6	.2	72
Yukon	.4	85	.2	.2	54
Totals	**542.3**	**116**	**216.1**	**326.2**	**40**

Source: Christine Blain, *Government Spending on Child Care in Canada*, A report prepared for the Task Force on Child Care. (Ottawa 1985) Series 1, Catalogue No SW43-1/1-1985E

Notes: Per capita amounts indicate total spending per child under 13 in the jurisdiction

*From the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, Ottawa, 1986. (Table 8.6) pg. 192.